

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 1 and 3 through 22 are pending, with Claims 1 and 22 being independent. Claims 1, 4, 21, and 22 have been amended.

The title has been amended as required.

Claims 17 through 19 were objected to and indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has respectfully maintained said claims in dependent form, as Applicant earnestly believes that the claims from which they depend will be found allowable.

Claims 1, 7, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,485,209 (Muramoto, et al.). Claims 1, 5 through 7, 9 through 16, 20, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,473,126 B1 (Higashihara, et al.). Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Muramoto, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,618,087 B1 (Hokari, et al.). Claim 21 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Muramoto, et al. and Hokari, et al. in view of pages 4 and 5 of the subject specification, which the Official Action asserts is prior art. Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Muramoto, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,047,807 (Okano, et al.). All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 22 variously recite, inter alia, a plurality of photoelectric conversion portions, the photoelectric conversion portion having a microlens which is common to the first and second photoelectric conversion units (Claim 1) or means (Claim 22) (in combination with a light blocking unit (Claim 1) or means (Claim 22) as claimed).

However, Applicant respectfully submits that none of Muramoto, et al., Higashihara, et al., Hokari, et al., the relied-upon portion of the specification, and Okano, et al., even in the proposed combinations, assuming, arguendo, that such could be combined, discloses or suggests at least the above-discussed combinations of claimed

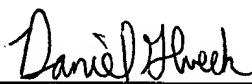
features as recited, inter alia, in Claims 1 and 22. The Official Action states that Muramoto, et al. does not disclose a microlens, and relies upon Hokari, et al. and page 4 of the specification for showing microlenses. However, Applicant respectfully submits that there has been no showing of any indication of motivation in the cited documents that would lead one having ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the above-discussed combinations of claimed features.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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